

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:
JOHN M. CURRAN

Application No.: 10/613,539

Filing Date: 07/03/03

FOR: IMPROVED SYSTEM AND
METHOD FOR FACILITATING PIPE AND
CONDUIT COUPLING

DECLARATION OF JOHN M. CURRAN IN
SUPPORT OF RESPONSE TO OFFICE
ACTION DATED 08/02/2006

EXAMINER: J. M. HEWITT

Art Unit: 3679

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Arlington, VA 22313-1450

John M. Curran hereby declares as follows:

- (1) My name is John M. Curran. I am the inventor on the within patent application for Improved System and Method for Facilitating Pipe and Conduit Coupling. My address is 10560 Fern Street, Stanton, CA 90680. I make this Declaration in support of Response to Office Action dated 08/02/2006 specifically in support of patentability of the invention in the within patent application. I make this Declaration upon personal knowledge and have first hand familiarity with the contents of this Declaration. If called as a witness, I could and would confidently and truthfully testify in accordance with this Declaration.
- (2) I have been engaged in the business of fitting and laying heavy pipe particularly in subsurface venues for 12 years. During that time, in connection with my

occupation, I have become familiar with the level of normal skill in the art in my field and I have become familiar with devices that have been or are in use in the field including devices for pipe coupling.

- (3) I have reviewed the references cited in the Office Action regarding the within patent application mailed October 2, 2006 and find them to have no pertinence to my invention. The device in Cohen et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,090,742) is one in which the Belleville washers provide the capability for maintaining a preload force in a bolted arrangement whereas in the application of my invention, the pipes are not yet bolted together and must be held in place by my retention means so that the screws will not slip through the screw holes. Equally irrelevant is the Fisher reference (U.S. Patent No. 4,911,594). I have seen the device in the Fisher reference: it has been in the field for years. It is difficult to work with, operates in a totally different manner from my invention, and is not particularly popular or well-liked. The device in the Fisher reference which has a metal plate with a hole in the middle together with a plurality of fingers/prongs extending from the plate, can be used only by placing it over the end of a screw. When the Fisher device (which is referred to as a push nut fastener), is placed over the end of a screw and in contact with a coupler at the screw hole, it can bind during the process of placing and moving along the screw if the device is in any manner placed or moved off-center. Also, if for any reason it is desired to remove the screw before it is permanently fastened, the Fisher device must be cut off the screw, with a potential for damaging the screw or, alternatively, the screw itself must be cut, with obvious problems. In addition, because the Fisher device is made of metal, there is risk of corrosion and further, the Fisher device is less flexible in terms of sizing in that the Fisher device must fit snugly over the screw.

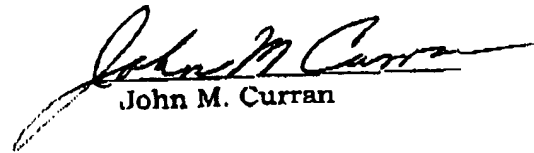
- (4) The attempt to combine the Fisher and the Cohen et al references makes no sense at all from a practical point of view. If the Cohen et al device is in place that means that the bolts and screws are already fastened in the coupler and the only problem/issue is how to maintain a preload. Under those circumstances, there can be no reason to attempt to hold the screws in their screw holes to retain the screws in the screw holes when they are located therein since they are already fastened within the screw holes. I do not know of any construction project where after the Cohen et al device was applied there would then be a retention means to hold the screws in the screw holes. This would be nonsensical.
- (5) In contrast to the Fisher device, my invention is not applied over the end and along the length of a screw that is to be retained; rather, it is simply mounted sideways on the screw that is, it is just simply fitted over the screw from the side of the screw. Further, if there is any reason to remove the screw before it is finally fastened, all that is necessary is that my retention ring simply be removed by hand. Moreover, my retention ring is made of thin flexible material which not need be metal and thus presents no corrosion risk. Also, there is complete flexibility with respect to size because my device does not need to be sized precisely to the dimensions of the screw in view of its resiliency and the manner in which it is fitted onto the screw to retain it in the screw hole prior to permanent securing/fastening.
- (6) As a result of the foregoing matters, there has been a general dissatisfaction in my industry with devices for retaining screws in place prior to finally securing them in pipe couplings and my device has completely answered that problem and resolved it such that I have had very extensive success with my invention, both commercially and with respect to efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

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p.5

I hereby declare under penalty under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
is true and correct.

Executed under penalty of perjury this 1st day of December 2006 at Stanton,
California.


John M. Curran

Webster's Third New International Dictionary

OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
UNABRIDGED

A Merriam-Webster
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

VOLUME III

S to Z

and Britannica World Language Dictionary.

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EXHIBIT 1

... of a steamer's screw or paddles; a surge set up by and ... after some moving object or process (as a ship, storm, ... wave) esp. as dissipated in force or transmitted to a ... from the center of the disturbance (was left swaying ... a small boat in the ~ of a millionaire's yacht—Maurice ...) b: a similar disturbance or wavelike agitation in ... set up by the passage of a storm center or rushing ... (as an airplane) c: a disturbance in the air produced ... the passage of an aircraft or propeller (the ~ from the prop ... at the loose ends of his scarf—Howard Hunt) d: the ... current or force in the trail of an intellectual or ... movement; *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) e: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) f: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) g: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) h: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) i: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) j: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) k: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) l: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) m: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) n: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) o: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) p: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) q: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) r: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) s: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) t: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) u: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) v: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) w: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) x: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) y: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...) z: *sway* (hard to know how much ... is solid ...)

... place at which material (as wool, ore, coal, or crushed stone) ... need from impurities or dust by washing ... pres 3d sing of WASH, pl of WASH ... a: resistant to fading or discoloration by ... a: a large circular washbowl set in the ... floor and supplied with running water from a central spray to ... permit simultaneous use by a number of people ... gravel n: gravel washed to extract gold ... hand n: adj, Brit; designed for use in washing the ... hands or for holding utensils for such purpose (a wash-hand ... basin) (a wash-hand stand) ... house n: a house or building used or equipped for ... washing; esp: one for washing clothes; LAUNDRY ... whiter comparative of WASHY ... whiter superlative of WASHY ... wash n: (flow, stream) + in: a permanent ... twist or warp of an airplane wing such that the tip section has a ... larger angle of attack than the root section ... wash n: woshens, 'wash-, 'woish-, 'n-es; the quality or ... state of being washy ... washing n: s [ME washing, fr. gerund of waschen to wash] ... 1: the act or action of one that cleanses with water (gave him- ... self a good ~) (gave the clothes a thorough ~) 2: washings ... pl a: liquid that has been used to wash something b (1): metal ... (as gold dust) obtained by washing (2): a place or soil yield- ... ing material generated by washing c: material collected by the ... washing of bodily cavity (sinus ~) (throat ~) 3 a: the ... action of waves or running water: the erosion or removal of ... material by running water b washings pl: material abraded ... or transported by the action of water 4 a: the operation of ... bathing, drenching, or coating with a liquid (as in mining ore) ... b: the act or process of applying a thin coat of paint (as water- ... color) c: the dipping of fruits (as apples, pears, or plums) in a ... dilute solution of hydrochloric acid followed by rinsing in ... water as a means of removing spray residues that might be ... toxic to humans 5: a thin covering or coat (a ~ of silver) ... 6: clothes or other articles washed or to be washed esp. at one ... time: WASH (the ~ was hanging in the back garden—J.I. ... Jones) 7: the execution of a wash sale ... washing bottle n: 1: WASH BOTTLE 2: a bottle for use in ... washing gases by passing them through liquid contained in it ... washing engine n: a device much like a beater in which rags ... are washed by a stream of water and also reduced to threads ... and fibers ... washing machine n: a machine for washing; *specif*: a usu. ... power-driven machine for washing clothes and household ... linen ... washing powder n: a powder for washing (as a soap powder ... for a powder, containing a synthetic detergent and alkaline ... builder) ... washing soda n: SODIUM CARBONATE 2(3) ... washing stuff n: an earthy deposit containing gold that may ... be extracted by washing ... wash-ing-ton 'woshington, 'wash-, 'woish-, -shn; sometimes ... -shnt-, + 'wosh-, or 'wtrsh- adj, usu cap 1 [fr. Washington, ... capital city of U.S., after George Washington 1799 first presi- ... dent of the U.S.;] or of from the city of Washington, D.C. ... (a Washington legislator): of the kind or style prevalent in ... Washington: WASHINGTONIAN 2 or WASHINGTONIAN usu cap ... W & often cap 3 [fr. Washington, northwestern state of U.S., ... after George Washington 1799;] or of from the state of ... Washington (Washington apples): of the kind or style ... prevalent in Washington: WASHINGTONIAN ... Washington clam n, usu cap W: a butter clam (*Saxidomus ... nuttallii*) ... Washington grass n, usu cap W & often cap G: a water shield ... (*Cabomba caroliniana*) ... Washington handpress n, usu cap W [after George Washing- ... ton 1799]: a hand-operated printing press perfected about ... 1829 ... wash-ing-to-nia 'wosh-ton-ia n, cap [NL, fr. George Washing- ... ton 1799 + -ia] a: a genus of massive fan palms of Cali- ... fornia and adjacent Mexico having large plicate leaves cut ... nearly to the middle and often bearing filaments on their mar- ... gins and a smooth trunk bearing a large shaggy mass of per- ... sistent dead leaf remains ... -washingtonia 'woshington-ia [NL, fr. George Washington 1799 + NL ... -ia] syn of OSMORHIZA ... -washingtonia 'woshington-ia [NL, fr. George Washington 1799 + NL ... -ia] syn of SEQUIA ... wash-ing-to-ni-an 'wosh-ton-ian adj, usu cap 1 [George Wash- ... ington 1799 first president of the United States + E ... -an] of, relating to, or characteristic of George Washington ... 2: of, relating to, or characteristic of the northwestern state of ... U.S.A. 3: of, relating to, or characteristic of Washing- ... ington, D.C., or the state of Washington b: of, relating to, ... or characteristic of the people of Washington, D.C., or the state ... of Washington ... -washingtonian 'woshington-ian n: a native or resident of Wash- ... ington, D.C., or the state of Washington 2: usu cap [Washing- ... ington Temperance Society, founded 1840 + E -an]: a member ... of the Washington Temperance Society ... wash-ing-to-ni-an 'wosh-ton-ian n, usu cap 1 [George Washing- ... ton 1799 + -ian] a: material (as papers, books, letters, or relics) relating to George ... Washington ... Washington lily n, usu cap W: a large white-flowered lily ... (*Lilium washingtonianum*) of the Pacific coast of the U.S. that ... is widely cultivated for ornament ... Washington palm n, usu cap W: a large fan palm (*Washing- ... tonia filifera*) with many slender filaments hanging from its ... leaf margins—called also *California fan palm* ... Washington pie n, usu cap W [after George Washington 1799]: ... cake layers put together with a jam or jelly filling ... Washington plant n, usu cap W: FANWORT ... Washington post n, usu cap W & P: an American ballroom ... dance of the end of the 19th century ... Washington's birthday n, usu cap W & B [after George Wash- ... ington 1799 first president of the United States] 1: February ... 22 formerly observed as a legal holiday in most states of the ... U.S. 2: the third Monday in February observed as a ... legal holiday in most states of the U.S.—called also *Presi- ... dent's Day* ... Washington thorn n, usu cap W [fr. Washington, D.C., capital ... city of the U.S.]: a Hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*) of ... eastern No. America that is often cultivated for its bright ... red fruit and showy autumn foliage ... wash-i-ta 'wash-to, 'ad, usu cap [fr. Fort Washita, Texas] ... -i-ta n: a subdivision of the Comanchean—see ... GEOLOGICAL TIME SCALE ... washita stone n [fr. Washita (*Ouachita*) river, southwest ... Arkansas]: a porous variety of novaculite used esp. for ... sharpening woodworking tools ... washland 'wosh-, 'n: land or a stretch of land washed periodi- ... cally by an overflowing stream ... washleather 'wosh-, 'n: a soft leather usu. made of split ... sheepskin dressed with oil in imitation of chamois 2 chiefly ... Brit: a piece of washleather or soft cloth used for dusting or ... cleaning: CHAMOIS (was flicking over the radiator with a ~ ... Nicholas Monsarrat) ... washman 'wosh-, 'n, pl washmen 1 a: a man who washes ... clothes 2: a textile worker who scours cloth during manu- ... facturing 2: a man who applies wash (as in tinplate making) ... wash mill n: any of several machines for washing clay, hides, ... or materials for cement

... rapidly produced by hardening the exposed portions of a usu. ... gelatinous collodion layer and washing off (the unhardened por- ... tions) with hot water ... wash n: oil (as straw oil) used in scrubbing esp. coke-oven ... gas: absorbing light oil and recovering benzene and other ... aromatic compounds ... wash out vt 1: to wash free of some extraneous substance (as ... dirt, soap, chemicals) 2 a: to drain of color in laundering ... (this fabric is washed out) b: to deplete of strength or vitality ... EXHAUST (after his recent illness, he is washed out for the time ... being) c: to correct (but to correct new washed out the effect ... of government reduction of its debt by the creation of bank ... deposits—T.O. Waage) d: to eliminate as useless or unsatisfac- ... tory: DISCARD, REJECT; *specif*: to dismiss (a student or candi- ... date) as failing to qualify 3 a: to destroy or render useless by ... the force or action of water (the storm washed out the bridge) ... (the heavy rains washed out the road) b: to rain out (the second ... game of the doubleheader was washed out by a sudden down- ... pour) ~ vt 1: to become depleted of color or vitality: FADE ... (technicolor makeup ... washed out on TV—Newsweek) ... 2: to fail to meet requirements or measure up to a standard; ... *specif*: to fail in a course of training (wash out of flight school) ... 3: WASH 2a ... washout 'wosh-, 'n: a channel cut by erosion ... in one sedimentary deposit and filled with the material of a ... younger deposit b: the washing out or away of earth esp. in ... the bed of a road or railroad by rain or a freshet; also: a place ... where the earth is washed away (traffic was delayed by a ~ ... after the storm) c: WASH 3d 2: the act or process of wash- ... ing or flushing out a container or pipe; also: a plumbing de- ... vice for such process 3 a: one that fails to measure up to ex- ... pectations or requirements: a total loss; FAILURE, FLOP (the ... first really hopeful idea he had reached had been washed out—W. ... Crofts) (the failures, the drunks, the ~s, the fellows running ... away from themselves—Hugh MacLennan) (the day was a ~ ... b: a person (as a flying cadet or college student) who has been ... failed out of a course of training or study c: the act or fact of ... failing (as in a course of training or study) d: a permanent ... twist or warp of an airplane wing such that the tip section has ... a smaller angle of attack than the root section b: an emer- ... gency signal given by hand or lantern to stop a railroad train ... wash plate n: any of several plates fitted in a ship's bottom to ... prevent surging of bilge water when the ship is rolling or pitch- ... ing; BAFFLE ... wash port n: FREEZING PORT ... washpot 'wosh-, 'n: a pot for washing; as: a large metal pot ... used outdoors for boiling clothes over an open fire (playing ... out there in the yard ... around an old fire-blackened ~—F. ... B. Gipson) b: a pot containing melted tin into which the ... plates are dipped to be coated in tinplate manufacturing ... wash primer n: a primer of low nonvolatile content and special ... adhesive and protective properties for coating metal ... washrack 'wosh-, 'n: WASHSTAND 2 ... washrag 'wosh-, 'n: a piece of cloth used in washing; *specif*: ... WASHCLOTH ... washroom 'wosh-, 'n: 1: a room (as in a restaurant or public ... building) equipped with washing and toilet facilities: LAVA- ... TORY 3a 2: a room in a dyeing plant in which fabrics are ... washed ... wash sale n: a prearranged fictitious sale of securities with no ... real change of ownership that is made to influence the market ... or to establish a loss for tax purposes ... washstand 'wosh-, 'n: 1 a: a piece of furniture combining fea- ... tures of a table and cupboard and used to hold articles (as a ... pitcher, basin, or towel) for washing the hands and face b: a ... washbowl (in a bathroom) set in place (as in ... a wall) and attached to water and drainpipes 2: a place (as in ... a garage) having water and drainage facilities for the washing ... of vehicles ... washstrake 'wosh-, 'n: WASHBOARD 1 ... wash-tail 'wosh-, 'n: 'wash-, 'n (so called fr. the up-and-down ... motion of its tail) dial Eng: PIED WAGTAIL ... washtray 'wosh-, 'n: LAUNDRY TRAY ... washtrough 'wosh-, 'n: a trough used for washing; *specif*: ... BUNDS ... wash tub 'wosh-, 'n: a tub in which clothes or other items are ... washed ... wash up vt 1: to wash one's face and hands 2 Brit: to wash ... the dishes after a meal (went straight to the sink where his wife ... was washing up—D.H. Lawrence) ~ vt 1: to get rid of by ... washing (wash up the spilled milk) 2: EXHAUST, FINISH (guess ... we've washed up that subject—Philip Barry) (a setback that ... washed him up as a heavyweight contender) ... washup 'wosh-, 'n: WASH UP 1 a: the act or process of wash- ... ing clean (thorough ~s, sterilization of cleaned surfaces—Ex- ... periment Station Record) (presses put frequent ~s also their ... product, a heavy body description—R. Russell) b: the act or process of washing ore 2: a place for washing ... wash-way 'wosh-, 'wash-, 'n, dial Eng: a place on a roadway ... covered by running water ... washwheel 'wosh-, 'n: a smooth or flanged rotating cylinder in ... which clothes or other fabrics are washed ... washwoman 'wosh-, 'n, pl washwomen: WASHWOMAN ... washwork 'wosh-, 'n: WASH DRAWING ... washy 'wosh-, 'wash-, 'woish-, -shl, + 'wosh- or 'wtrsh- ... adj -est/-st [wash + -y] 1 a obs: being full of moisture ... WATERY (they ... on the ~ ooze deep channels were—John ... Milton) b: easily eroding or washing out or away (a ~ bank) ... (a ~ hillside) 2 a: lacking in substance or strength: DUTTY, ... TRUN, WATERY (the ~ b's defined many of the colors and ... of color: WALLID (these strong earth colors attack the trail pink ... of the cherry blossoms ... and leave it looking ~ and dirty ... —Anthony West) (a ~ pink or red with too much blue in it ... —E.H.M. Cox) b: lacking in vigor, individuality, or definite- ... ness (keeping one foot in a sort of ~ respectability—Compton ... Mackenzie) 3 obs: lacking in moral stamina or strength of ... character: VAPOROUS, LOOSE 4 a of a domestic animal: lack- ... ing in condition and in firmness of flesh; having a tendency ... to scour or sweat profusely on slight exertion (a ~ steer) (a ~ ... horse) b: tending to produce flabbiness or scouring in ani- ... mals ~ (as ~ grass) (a ~ weed) ... was'nt 'wosh-, 'n: WAS NOT ~ in rapid speech 'wad'nt (t); ... dial 'waint' (by contr.) 1: WAS NOT ... wasp 'wosh-, 'wosh-, 'n: ME wasp, fr. OE wasp, wa, wasp; ... akin to OHG wafsa, wafsa wasp, Lith ... vapsa gadfly, L waspa wasp, OE ... wefan to weave—more at WEAVE] ... 1 a: any of numerous winged hy- ... menopterous insects that generally ... have a slender smooth body with the ... abdomen attached by a narrow stalk, ... well-developed wings, biting mouth- ... parts, and in the females and workers ... a more or less formidable sting ... belong to many different families and ... include forms of social as well as ... solitary habits, and that are largely ... carnivorous and often provision their ... nests with caterpillars, insects, or ... spiders killed or paralyzed by stinging for their larvae to feed ... on—compare SPHECOIDEA, VESPOIDEA; DRAGON WASP, HOR- ... NET, YELLOW JACKET; SEE B: any of various hymenopterous ... insects (as a chalcid fly or ichneumon fly) having larvae that ... are parasitic esp. on other insect larvae 2 a: a waspish person ... b: something that stings or infuriates ... twasp 'wosh-, 'n: 4 usu cap [Women's Air Force Service Pilots]: a

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EXHIBIT 1